

EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Akron, OH

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Akron for a Brownfields Pilot. Akron was also selected to receive additional funding for assessments at Brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. The Pilot targets abandoned industrial properties throughout the City of Akron, which has 223,019 residents and encompasses 62.2 square miles. In 1998, Akron's employment was 105,400 in a labor force that totaled 117,700, leaving 6,300 residents unemployed. The Pilot also targets the historic Ohio & Erie Canal corridor.

Historically, Akron's economy has been rooted in rubber manufacturing. In recent years, many of Akron's rubber companies have relocated their operations outside the city, leaving behind abandoned buildings and a legacy of environmental concerns that have plagued the city's redevelopment efforts. Akron's capacity for growth is further hindered by the fact that only 2 percent of the city's remaining land is available for development. With a shortage of developable land and increasing demand for sites in the area, the city is incorporating brownfields cleanup into its economic redevelopment program. In 1994, the City of Akron was designated an Enterprise Community by the federal government and "priority investment area" by the State of Ohio.

PILOT SNAPSHOT

Date of Announcement:
May 2000



Akron, OH

Amount: \$200,000
Greenspace: \$50,000

Profile: The Pilot plans to use the funding to identify sites, perform environmental assessments, and develop appropriate cleanup and redevelopment plans for industrial sites scattered throughout Akron. Greenspace funding will be used to conduct environmental assessments in the Ohio & Erie Canal area for eventual redevelopment that highlights its historic significance.

Contacts:

City of Akron
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Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 5
(312) 353-3161

Visit the EPA Region 5 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

OBJECTIVES

The City of Akron's goal is to establish a successful brownfields redevelopment process using Pilot funding to create a model for future redevelopment efforts. Pilot funding will be used to assess potential environmental contamination in the Ohio & Erie Canal corridor and at various other abandoned industrial properties throughout the city.

The additional greenspace funding will be used to conduct Phase I and Phase II assessments in the Ohio & Erie Canal corridor to pave the way for cleanup and redevelopment that highlights the historic and aesthetic qualities of the area. The Pilot also will be utilized to obtain input from the public and key stakeholders on potential reuse options.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Locating, identifying, and prioritizing contaminated sites targeted for redevelopment;
- Assessing, characterizing, and developing cleanup plans for targeted sites;
- Conducting Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments on targeted sites;
- Identifying response or cleanup options for the targeted properties;
- Conducting activities that foster community involvement in the cleanup and redevelopment planning processes in the targeted areas; and

Evaluating preliminary design and planning options for identified sites.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.